

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 03916 231148Z
ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7291
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 3916

EXDIS

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US,
SUBJ: RHODESIA: OUR RESPONSE TO SITHOLE

REF: PRETORIA 6985, 6995, 7023

1. WE SEE DANGEROUS PITFALLS IN THE PROPOSALS WHICH
GABELLAH HAS MADE TO US IN SITHOLE'S NAME. IN OUR
VIEW, IT IS AN OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO ASSOCIATE US WITH
THE INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS GOING ON IN SALISBURY. FOR US
TO ENGAGE IN CONSULTATIONS WITH SITHOLE OVER PROVISIONS
BEING DISCUSSED IN THE SALISBURY NEGOTIATIONS, WOULD
BE IN EFFECT TO JOIN IN THOSE NEGOTIATIONS AND GIVE THEM
OUR BLESSINGS. NOT ONLY WOULD SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA BE DE-
LIGHTED BY SUCH A DEVELOPMENT BUT WE ARE SURE SMITH WOULD
BE EQUALLY PLEASED - IF HE DID NOT PUT SITHOLE UP TO THIS
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PLOY IN THE FIRST PLACE.

2. WE NEED TO DECIDE, AS BILL BOWDLER SAID, HOW TO ANSWER
SITHOLE'S LETTER AND HOW TO CARRY ON FUTURE CONTACTS. WITH BILL,
I ASSUME, WE WILL COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH THE FCO.

3. KAUNDA'S CAPER WITH SMITH BACKFIRED ON HIM IN NO

SMALL PART BECAUSE OF THE SUSPICIONS IT AROUSED AS A RESULT OF THE SECRETIVE WAY IT WAS CARRIED ON. WE MUST BE CAREFUL TO AVOID SIMILAR COMPLICATIONS. THUS, WE BELIEVE OUR REPLY TO SITHOLE SHOULD BE IN THE FORM OF A WRITTEN LETTER WHICH GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET A NUMBER OF OUR THOUGHTS ON RECORD. WE SHOULD CONSIDER LATER MAKING THE LETTER PUBLIC. A WRITTEN REPLY PROVIDES US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO CLARIFY SOME OF THE CONFUSION WHICH SMITH IS ATTEMPTING TO CREATE BY SUCH STATEMENTS AS THE ONE HE IS REPORTED TO HAVE MADE (IN PRETORIA 6995, PARA 4) TO THE EFFECT THAT THE UK, US, UN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WOULD ACCEPT A SETTLEMENT HE NEGOTIATED WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. WE COULD STRESS THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO AN AGREEMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE MAJOR PARTIES. AT THE SAME TIME, WE SHOULD REPEAT OUR VIEW THAT NO ONE PARTY HAS A VETO. THERE MAY BE SOME POINT IN SENDING A SIMILAR LETTER TO MUZOREWA AT THE SAME TIME.

4. IN THE SAME SPIRIT, OUR CONTACTS WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE MUST CLEARLY BE SEEN TO BE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL. IT SEEMS TO US THAT CONTACTS WITH SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA IN PRETORIA WHILE THE SALISBURY TALKS ARE GOING ON WILL SOON BECOME KNOWN AND ARE LIKELY TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD BY AFRICANS TO THE NORTH. THEY WOULD CERTAINLY BE EXPLOITED BY SMITH AND THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS AS WELL AS BY PEOPLE LIKE THE SOVIETS.

5. IN TERMS OF QUESTION 2, FURTHER CONTACTS, WE WOULD BE
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INCLINED TO OPT FOR AN INVITATION TO MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO COME TO LONDON BUT ONLY AFTER WE HAVE MET WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. TALKS WITH US MIGHT BE ATTRACTIVE TO THEM AS A MEANS OF STRENGTHENING THEIR BARGAINING POSITION WITH SMITH AND, IF MEETING TOOK PLACE AFTER TALKS WITH THE PF, COULD BE DESCRIBED CONVINCINGLY TO THE WORLD AS FURTHER DISCUSSIONS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL. ON THE OTHER HAND IT WOULD CREATE OBVIOUS PROBLEMS IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. PRESUMABLY, HOWEVER, WE COULD MAKE CLEAR TO THEM THE REASONS FOR THE NEED FOR SUCH CONSULTATIONS. LOW

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